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May 17, 2021

**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

The Honorable Jocelyn G. Boyd  
Chief Clerk and Executive Director  
Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100  
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

**RE: Joint Petition of Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC and Duke Energy Progress, LLC For Approval of Accounting Order to Defer Incremental COVID-19 Expenses to be Included in Future Rate Proceedings  
Docket No. 2020-195-E**

Dear Ms. Boyd:

Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC and Duke Energy Progress, LLC (together, the “Companies”) have reviewed the Report of the Office of Regulatory Staff (“ORS”) filed in the above matter on April 16, 2021.

The Companies are proud of their actions in assisting customers and providing reliable electric service during the COVID-19 pandemic. As explained in various filings in Docket No. 2020-106-A (*Actions in Response to COVID-19*), the Companies suspended disconnections for non-payment beginning March 13, 2020, and complied with the orders of this Commission suspending disconnections and requiring the Companies to work with customers once the disconnection moratorium was lifted. Consistent with those requirements and general request from the Commission to work with customers, the Companies also provided relief on late-payment fees, return check charges, and reconnection fees for a substantial amount of time.

Notably, the amount of past-due bills and arrearages continued to grow throughout the summer months, but the Companies’ efforts related to payment plans appeared to help customers begin to reduce their overall past-due balances. Since March 2020, the Companies sent on-going and multiple communications to our customers with content including ways to manage costs utilizing energy efficiency tips, links to agencies who provide bill assistance, and information about extended payment plans. The Companies utilized a wide variety of media channels and communication platforms including bill messages, emails, text messages, social media, conversations with non-profit partners and business groups in order to reach as many

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customers as possible. The Companies helped customers with customized, interest-free payment plans that met their specific needs, as well as connecting them with local organizations that can offer support by providing funding to assist with payment of utility bills. Although disconnection processes for non-payment resumed October 12, 2020 and October 19, 2020, for DEP and DEC, respectively, the Companies' goal has always been to make disconnections for non-payment a last resort for our customers and we continue to work with our customers on payment plans. The Companies are confident that these actions helped our customers through the recent—and ongoing—challenges of the pandemic.

The Companies were disappointed that the ORS comments filed April 16, 2021 opposed our cost recovery proposals. However, while the Companies do not agree with ORS' April 16, 2021 comments and believe the request for an accounting order was reasonable and in line with other requests made around the country, the Companies do not intend to pursue this matter at this time given the extended time additional proceedings on the matter would take and given the focus in South Carolina to get back to normal business. Accordingly, the Companies hereby withdraw their Joint Petition filed in the above-referenced docket.

By copy of this letter, I am serving all parties of record via electronic mail.

Sincerely,



Heather Shirley Smith

cc: Nanette S. Edwards, Executive Director, Office of Regulatory Staff  
Dawn Hipp, Chief Operating Officer, Office of Regulatory Staff  
Jeff Nelson, Chief Legal Officer, Office of Regulatory Staff  
Parties of record